

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01300 132111Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /075 W
-----132118Z 110731 /63

O P 131915Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5634
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1300

ABIDJAN FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, RH, ZA
SUBJ: FONMIN MWALE STATES ZAMBIA IS UNDER ATTACK THREAT FROM
RHODESIA

SUMMARY: HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS LUSAKA WERE CONVOKED,
INDIVIDUALLY OR IN GROUPS, BY FONMIN MWALE AFTERNOON MAY 13
AND ALERTED TO THREAT BY IAN SMITH TO LAUNCH PREEMPTIVE
RAIDS INTO ZAMBIA. PRESIDENT KAUNDA WILL ADDRESS THE NATION
MONDAY TO WARN OF GRAVE PERIL. BRITISH HAS BEEN ASKED BY
SMITH TO PASS ON TO KAUNDA RHODESIAN THREAT OF PREEMPTIVE
STRIKES IF ZAPU CONTINUED ITS PLAN TO LAUNCH AN OFFENSIVE
AGAINST RHODESIA FROM ZAMBIA. END SUMMARY.

1. CHARGE MET ALONE WITH FONMIN MWALE MAY 13; HE IMMEDIATELY
SAID THAT, ACCORDING TO A HIGHLY RELIABLE SOURCE, IAN SMITH
WAS THREATENING TO MAKE PREEMPTIVE STRIKES INTO ZAMBIA.
PRETEXT FOR SUCH STRIKES WOULD BE THAT ZAPU FORCES OPERATING
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 01300 132111Z

OUT OF CAMPS IN ZAMBIA WERE PLANNING TO LAUNCH AN OFFENSIVE
AGAINST RHODESIA. THIS, SAID MWALE, IS TOTALLY UNTRUE.
THERE ARE ONLY REFUGEE CAMPS IN ZAMBIA, AND THEY MIGHT
POSSIBLY BE TAKEN FOR MILITARY TRAINING SITES IF ONE WERE
PERFORMING AN AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE. EVERYONE KNEW THAT
ZAMBIA WAS A PEACE LOVING COUNTRY WHICH WOULD NOT ATTACK
ANYONE. HOWEVER, IF ATTACKED ZAMBIA WOULD DEFEND ITSELF.

2. ZAMBIA TOOK VERY SERIOUSLY SMITH'S THREAT GIVEN THE RAIDS CONDUCTED BY RHODESIAN FORCES AGAINST "PEACEFUL VILLAGES" IN MOZAMBIQUE. PRESIDENT KAUNDA WOULD ADDRESS THE NATION MONDAY MAY 16, ALERTING THE NATION TO THE PERIL IT FACES.

3. GRZ WAS BRINGING TO THE ATTENTION OF ALL EMBASSIES IN LUSAKA THE POSSIBILITY OF RHODESIAN ATTACKS BECAUSE THEY WOULD WANT TO ALERT THEIR GOVERNMENTS AND RESIDENTS IN ZAMBIA. FOR, IF THERE WERE AN ATTACK, NOT ONLY INNOCENT ZAMBIANS BUT INNOCENT FOREIGN RESIDENTS AS WELL WOULD SUFFER.

4. WHEN ASKED THE SOURCE OF HIS RELIABLE INFORMATION, MWALE SAID SMITH HAD PASSED HIS THREAT TO KAUNDA THROUGH THE BRITISH. HE SAID HE FOUND IT MOST STRANGE THAT THE BGITISH WOULD FIND THEMSELVES IN THE ROLE OF AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT THAT THEY LABELED AS "REBEL" AND A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT LIKE THAT OF ZAMBIA.

5. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER INFORMED THE CHARGE AFTER HE AND OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS HAD HAD THEIR SESSION WITH MWALE THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN HAD RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM SMITH THREATENING PREEMPTIVE ACTION FOR TRANSMITTAL TO KAUNDA. UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM OWEN, HIGH COMMISSION LUSAKA HAD PASSED THE MESSAGE WITHOUT COMMENT TO KAUNDA.

COMMENT: KAUNDA HAS FOR YEARS FEARED A RETALIATORY STRIKE FROM RHODESIA AGAINST ZAMBIA. IN RECENT STATEMENTS HE HAS PUBLICLY TAKEN THE POSITION THAT IN THE INTEREST OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LUSAKA 01300 132111Z

ARMED STRUGGLE, ZAMBIA MUST TAKE THE RISK OF BEING A FOCUS OF SUCH ATTACKS. THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT REPORTS THAT ZAPU IS PLANNING TO LAUNCH A MAJOR OFFENSIVE FROM ZAMBIAN TERRITORY. KAUNDA'S LONG STANDING FEARS COUPLED WITH HIS KNOWLEDGE THAT ZAPU OFFENSIVES MAY BE CONTEMPLATED WOULD LEND CREDENCE IN HIS EYES TO SMITH'S THREAT OF A PREEMPTIVE ATTACK AND EXPLAIN HIS PLANNED ADDRESS TO THE NATION AND THE BRIEFING OF THE DIP CORPS.
CLINGERMAN

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Message Attributes

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